

# Newsletter

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**W**elcome to the January 2013 edition of the Newsletter. The organ for all ex-Craft, Central, Technical and post-amalgamation Old Boys.

## Editorial

On behalf of the Committee, the editor wishes all members, their friends and families, a very happy and prosperous new year.

Supporters of Fulham F.C. (there must be some) will remember their larger-than-life chairman – Tommy Trinder. His catch-phrase – “You lucky people”, might be applied to readers of this edition of the newsletter which has been expanded (for a limited time only) to four pages. (Harry Cooke would be impressed.)

2012 has passed into the annals of history and so we stand at the gate of the year 2013 – a blank page on which to write. The country remains in the grip of austerity with our future in Europe uncertain and the Scots threatening to secede from the Union. Civil unrest has broken out in Belfast and much of the country struggles to recover from precipitation and floods of biblical proportions. A gloomy prospect indeed. But we must remain optimistic. There is always the promise of a ‘barbecue summer’. (Well, we are overdue one by some considerable margin!)

Stroud and its environs are, as ever, a hive of activity. A splendid new swing bridge has been installed over the Stroudwater Navigation in Chestnut Lane and the development of the Cashes Green Hospital site continues at breakneck speed with a network of scaffolding spreading ever wider and higher and Dickensian-badged Cullimore Fodens ERFs and Volvos scuttling to and fro leaving a muddy tell-tale trail in their wake.

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## Annual Dinner 2012

The 65<sup>th</sup> Annual Dinner was held at the Whitminster Inn Marquee on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2012.

Yet again there was a good turnout and the Whitminster's culinary standards were upheld – an excellent meal served by a pleasant and efficient staff. We extend our thanks and appreciation to them all.

We also thank Mr. Bernard Trott for yet again securing a superb deal for the Association, supplying a PA system that functioned faultlessly and, also, the apparatus for running the raffle, of which more later.

We are also indebted to Mr. David Boulton for overseeing the whole evening and ensuring that the event went off seamlessly and without a hitch. Much ‘behind the scenes’ effort is put into organising the Annual Dinner, both before and on the night itself, and it is largely down to David, often ploughing a lonely furrow, that every year it is a great success. Thank you David for this and all the other hard work you put into administering the Association.

Our guest speaker was, for the second year running, Mr. Mark Cummings of BBC Radio Gloucestershire. Although not an old boy, Mark takes a great interest in the School and his anecdotes and vignettes are thoroughly entertaining. We are indebted to him for making time in his busy schedule to attend.

We were, again, honoured to welcome Dr. Stuart Wilson, Head Teacher of Marling School. Stuart was able to update us on Marling's progress and successes during its first year since attaining academy status. We are delighted that the School is going from strength to strength and long may it continue to do so.

## Tales of Mystery and Imagination and the Annual Dinner Raffle

One of the undoubted highlights of the evening was the running of the raffle. This took the form of a somewhat bizarre and surreal nature, solely, we believe, the devise of Mr. David Boulton.

Some say he developed the idea over many years after listening to Horace Batchelor and his ‘Amazing Infra-Draw Method’ while tuned to Radio Luxembourg under the bedclothes sometime during 1959; and that his frequent holiday trips to Bonnie Scotland are really undercover sorties with the aim of undermining both Holyrood and Alex Salmond in one fell swoop, thus finally solving the West Lothian Question which has vexed politicians and Gordon Brown for years.

All we know is – he's called the Hon. Sec!

We are, nevertheless, pleased to report that this arcane interlude passed off successfully and without incident. All winners were awarded prizes which were very kindly donated by Martyn Young of Specialist Fire Solutions Ltd. to whom we extend our gratitude.

Receipts from raffle ticket sales totalled £361.00 which, together with miscellaneous donations of £30.50, comprises a much needed credit to Association funds.

## Artists Cornered

Veteran aficionados of 'Coronation Street' will remember Hilda Ogden's 'muriel' which adorned one wall of her living room. Recent discussions amongst the Committee members have raised the issue of the existence of our own 'muriel' which is thought to have resided in the School Hall. Memories are somewhat vague after so many years but if any members can recall it, particularly; its precise location, what it depicted, who the artist was and what eventually happened to it, the editor would be very interested to know.

### Portrait of the Headmaster as a Middle-Aged Man

Frank Fuller was Headmaster of the 'Central School', as it was then called, from 1926-30. For many years he proved a somewhat enigmatic figure and photographs of him scarce. However, a good likeness has been discovered and Marling's Art Department has been commissioned to produce a portrait similar to that of WGE. Thus portraits of all 'House' Headmasters; Fuller, Elliott, Carter and Greenstreet will adorn the walls of the Great Hall. We very much look forward to a viewing in due course.

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### Letters to the Editor

This is a new feature where you can have your say. We want to hear your views, news and ideas. Brickbats and bouquets – we want to hear them. (Letters signed 'Disgusted – Nempnett Thrubwell' will not be published.)

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### Sid Brews' Golf



John Giles has kindly supplied details of 2012-2013 tournaments:-

**2012 Results:-** 1<sup>st</sup>: Tim Knight  
2<sup>nd</sup>: Paul Curtis  
3<sup>rd</sup>: Bob Cook

All scored 32 points. Conditions were difficult hence the low points which were decided on 'countback'

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The date for 2013 golf is **Sunday 5th May**. It is a Bank Holiday weekend but the only Sunday available in May, at the golf club.

Details:- **Sunday 5th May**

**9.30.a.m.** At the Old Course Minchinhampton Common (before the cows are turned out).

To be followed by a meal and presentation.

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### Farewell

**Patrick Etherton (1942-47) Scott** died 23.11.12 aged 83 at The Camp near Stroud after a long fight with cancer. He leaves his wife, two sons, three daughters, grand and great grandchildren. Known as the 'left-handed trombone player' he played for the Chalford Band for 44 years. A full obituary appears in the 'Stroud News & Journal' for 5<sup>th</sup> Dec 2012

**Stanley C.A.Thain (1939-42) Arnold** died 20.11.12 aged 85 following a fall at his home in Portugal.

**Anthony J. Hodges (1949-54) Drake** died suddenly 21.12.12 at his home at Windsor edge, Nailsworth. He is survived by his wife, Yvonne, a son and twin daughters.

**Robin Neil Hopper (1959-65) Scott** died 12.12.12 aged 65 at Potton, Bedfordshire, formerly of Box, Minchinhampton.

### Mike Hopper writes:-

It is with deepest regret that I have to tell you that my brother Robin (6.9.1947) died peacefully after a long battle with cancer last night 12.12.12 in the Sue Ryder Hospice in Bedford surrounded by his family. I would appreciate it if you could mention it in the next news letter. He was in Scott House and bass guitarist in The Ravens in his youth. He leaves a wife and 4 grown up children.

Robin, on leaving school, served an apprenticeship with Cavendish House in Cheltenham, where he met his 1st wife Joy and had 2 children; Ben and Clare. He then moved to Welwyn Garden City, where he was under-buyer at John Lewis dept. store. He set up his own business in soft fabrics, and also repped in the evenings for a double glazing company which he eventually owned. He had showrooms in Stevenage and had 2 children, Alistair and Tanya by his second wife. Tragically she died and he married Cathy some 10 years ago inheriting 2 stepsons.

Robin relaunched his business and moved to Sandy Nr. Bedford, where he specialised in Marquees, and Conservatories, converting some of his premises into self contained units for B&B. My brother had a full and busy life.

Mike Hopper

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## Association Committee Retirements

It is with regret that we must announce the retirement from the Committee of Peter Baxter and Harry Linforth. Between them they have notched up a staggering 73 years service to the Association. On behalf of the Committee and all members of the Association, thank you Peter and Harry for your long and loyal service. We wish you both a long and happy 'retirement'. We are sorry to report that Harry has not been in the best of health recently and we wish him a speedy recovery.

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### Chris Blick writes:-

'Following the inclusion of an article in the September Edition of the Newsletter may I be permitted to follow that up with something about our Church Service held on 29 November 2012 at St. Katharine's Church in Matson, Gloucester? Some 80 Aden Veterans Association Gloucestershire Branch members attended on a sunny November morning at the Church below the Ski Slope of Robinswood Hill on the outskirts of Gloucester. Our esteemed guest was the Lord Lieutenant of Gloucestershire, Dame Janet Trotter DBE, accompanied by Major General Paul Stevenson OBE of Wortley near Wotton-under-Edge who served both in Aden in the 1960s and more recently in the Falkland Islands.

The Reverend Frances Quist, who had just been appointed Priest in Charge of St Katharine's, and the Reverend Brian Woollaston, Vicar of St Paul's Whiteshill and a former Army Chaplain, conducted the Service being our AVA Gloucestershire Branch Padre. The Organist was Nigel Davies of St James the Great Parish Church in Dursley and the Cornet Player was Debbie McDougal of the Nailsworth Silver Band, so we used up the local talent to make the whole event a great success.

During the Service a bronze memorial plaque was dedicated to those who lost their lives in Aden during the 1960s to include members of the Armed Forces and Civilians working in Government Offices and at various commercial enterprises in the Protectorate of Aden to include the British Petroleum Company's plant at Little Aden.

I have included two photographs; one of me taken in Aden in the early 1960's and the other includes me in the rear of the photograph along with the AVA Gloucestershire Branch Standard Bearer Mick Kippin, the Reverend Frances Quist, the Reverend Brian Woollaston and a young lad of six years old who was at school in Steamer Point in 1964 namely Robert Parrant!

(Editor's Note:-)

*The Colony of Aden or 'Aden Colony' was a British Crown colony from 1937 to 1963. It consisted of the port of Aden and its immediate surroundings (an area of 192 km<sup>2</sup> (72 mi<sup>2</sup>)). Prior to 1937 Aden had been governed as part of British India (originally as the Aden Settlement) under the Bombay Presidency, and then as a 'Chief Commissioner's Province'. Under the Government of India Act 1935 the territory was detached from British India, and was established as a separate colony of the*

*United Kingdom; this separation took effect on 1 April 1937.*

*On 18<sup>th</sup> January 1963, the colony was reconstituted as the State of Aden within the new Federation of South Arabia. The federation in turn became the People's Republic of South Yemen on 30<sup>th</sup> November 1967, marking the end of British rule.*

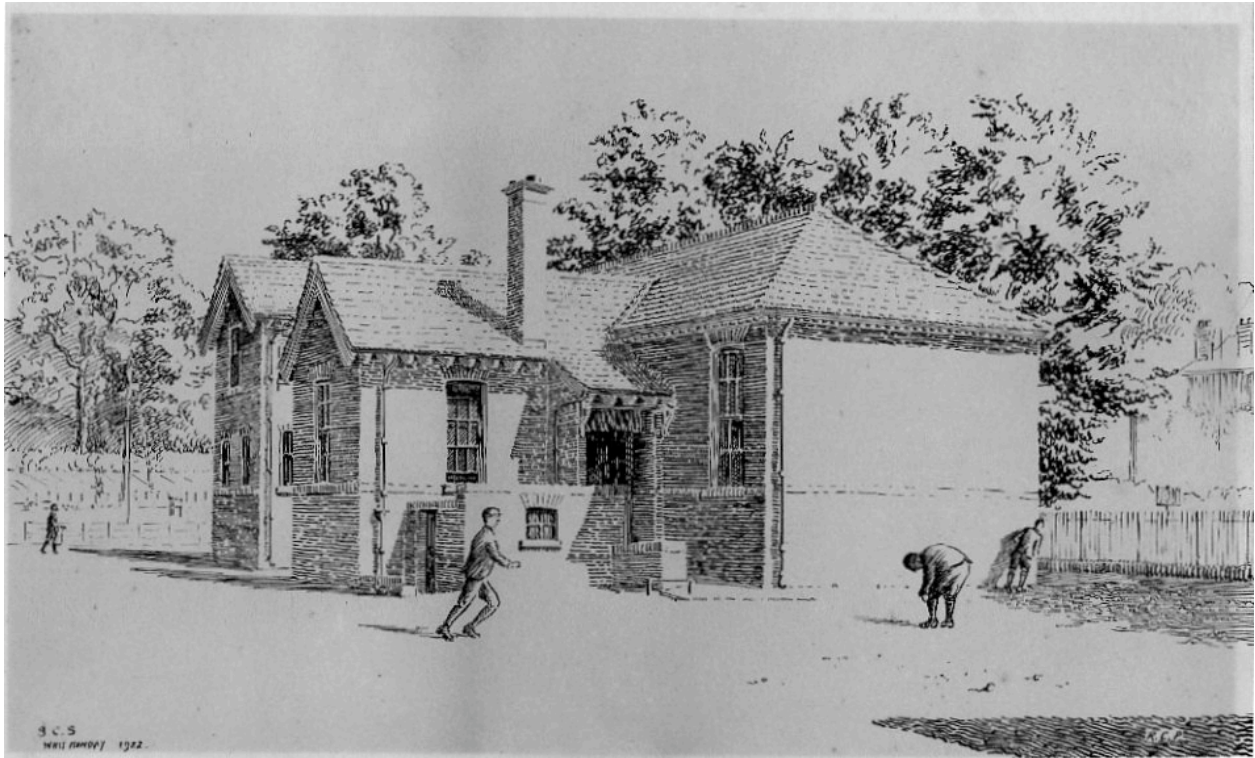
*The hinterland of the colony of Aden was separately governed as the Aden Protectorate.*

*(Source – abridged from entry in 'Wikipedia'. The editor cannot guarantee the accuracy of this but will, of course, be pleased to correct any inconsistencies or errors in fact.)*

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aden\\_Protectorate](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aden_Protectorate)

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aden>





**The School in 1922 – Pen and Ink sketch by R. C. Perry, Art Master, 1920 – 1933**

This superb sketch is one of two recently discovered in the shed of the late Tom Deacon. It is by R. C. Perry who was art master at the School from 1920 to 1933 and is dated Whit Sunday 1922 so the depiction of the boys is probably 'artistic licence' unless they were at school for a particular purpose that day. Perhaps going to or coming from a church service?

The view is taken from approximately where Mr. Tarn's lab now stands. Beards Lane leads off to the right of the picture and the railway runs along the back. The Headmaster's study has not yet been extended and the tall chimney has disappeared. The following extract from the Centenary Magazine gives further details:-

Two interesting additions to the original buildings were made in 1956. The Headmaster's office was enlarged and extended towards the workshops with the addition of a small private room and the Staff room was given another bay parallel to the new office over an enlarged cloakroom. The new work matched the old very closely and the bricks were specially made by the Stonehouse Brick and Tile Company. The contractor was Clifford Savage, an Old Boy, and over the years the work has weathered nicely so that now, as Eric Morecambe used to say, 'you can't see the join'.

(Footnote – Maths master in 1922 was a certain 22 year old TVP. He'd already been at the school for a year!)

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**And finally:-**

Registration with Harry Cooke –

HBC: "Laddie, you're late. Why?"

Puffing second former: "Sorry sir, I got lost."

HBC: "But you've been coming here from Eastington every day for two years!"

Boy: "We've moved, sir."

HBC: "Oh, where to?"

Boy: "Stratford Road, sir."

That's all for now, chaps.

**Get in touch! Keep in touch!**

Chas Webb, Hon. Newsletter Editor.